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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-14 (Canceled.)

Claim 15 (Currently Amended). A method for detecting and/or quantifying a nucleic acid coding for submandibular/submaxillary rat 1 protein (SMR1) comprising:

- a) contacting a DNA or RNA molecule with a nucleotide probe having the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 7 ~~under stringent conditions allowing in a hybridization solution containing~~

0.5 M sodium phosphate, pH 7.2.

7% sodium dodecylsulfate.

1 mM EDTA.

1% bovine serum albumin, and

sonicated salmon sperm DNA; 100 mg/ml.

at 65% for 16 to 20 h so as to allow said probe to hybridize with the target

DNA or RNA molecule; and

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- b) detecting the hybrid formed between the DNA or RNA molecule and said nucleotide probe.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended). A method according to claim 15 for detecting and/or qualifying mRNA coding for SMR1 polypeptide consisting essentially of:

- a) preparing mRNAs containing poly (A) sequence from the sub-maxillary gland of a rat;
- b) subjecting said RNAs prepared in step a) to an electrophoresis in a gel;
- c) transferring said RNAs to a ~~nylon~~ nitrocellulose membrane;
- d) contacting said membrane with a nucleotide probe having the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 7 under stringent conditions allowing said probe to hybridize to the target RNA;
- e) detecting the hybrid formed between the RNA and the nucleotide probe; and
- f) optionally quantifying the number of hybrid molecules as formed.

Claim 17 (Canceled.)